



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

[Docket Number FRA-2020-0087]

Petition for Waiver of Compliance

Under part 211 of title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), this provides the public notice that on November 5, 2020, Illinois Central Railroad Company, for itself and on behalf of the U.S. railroad subsidiaries operating under the Canadian National Railway Company (CN), petitioned the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for a waiver of compliance from certain provisions of the Federal railroad safety regulations contained at 49 CFR part 232, *Brake System Safety Standards for Freight and Other Non-Passenger Trains and Equipment; End-of-Train Devices*. FRA assigned the petition Docket Number FRA-2020-0087.

Specifically, CN proposes to use software technology to implement a virtual three-dimensional simulation as an alternative to satisfy the “hands-on” portion of periodic refresher training required by 49 CFR 232.203(b)(8). Refresher training is required at intervals not to exceed 3 years, and must consist of classroom and hands-on training, as well as testing. CN states the training will better equip CN employees to perform Class I freight air brake tests and there will be no impact on safety.

The instructor-led simulation is based on performance of a Class I freight air brake test and is designed to place the user in a virtual realistic scenario. The user is required to perform a variety of inspection tasks relating to preprogrammed defects including, but not limited to, closed cut-out cocks, uncoupled air hoses, closed angle cocks, improperly positioned retainer valves, fouled brake rigging, and using a two-way end-of-train device. CN states that it is often difficult to stage various types of freight air brake equipment with defects to demonstrate the location of key components. CN also

states that the simulation allows CN to control the environment and employees are better able to examine components of the air brake system. Furthermore, given the restrictions of person-to-person contact related to COVID-19, safety is further enhanced by utilizing the simulation. CN proposes to apply this waiver system-wide to all CN personnel responsible for performing Class I freight air brakes tests. CN explains it may use the simulation as a supplement at initial training, but it will not replace traditional hands-on training employees receive at initial training.

A copy of the petition, as well as any written communications concerning the petition, is available for review online at www.regulations.gov.

Interested parties are invited to participate in these proceedings by submitting written views, data, or comments. FRA does not anticipate scheduling a public hearing in connection with these proceedings since the facts do not appear to warrant a hearing. If any interested parties desire an opportunity for oral comment and a public hearing, they should notify FRA, in writing, before the end of the comment period and specify the basis for their request.

All communications concerning these proceedings should identify the appropriate docket number and may be submitted by any of the following methods:

- Web site: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- Fax: 202-493-2251.
- Mail: Docket Operations Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE, W12-140, Washington, DC 20590.
- Hand Delivery: 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.

Communications received by **[INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF**

PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER] will be considered by FRA before final action is taken. Comments received after that date will be considered if practicable.

Anyone can search the electronic form of any written communications and comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the document, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). Under 5 U.S.C. 553(c), DOT solicits comments from the public to better inform its processes. DOT posts these comments, without edit, including any personal information the commenter provides, to www.regulations.gov, as described in the system of records notice (DOT/ALL-14 FDMS), which can be reviewed at <https://www.transportation.gov/privacy>. See also <https://www.regulations.gov/privacyNotice> for the privacy notice of [regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov).
Issued in Washington, DC.

John Karl Alexy,

Associate Administrator for Railroad Safety,

Chief Safety Officer.

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